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Pamphlets on free Trade

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Number 17.

THE AMERICAN PROTECTIVE TARIFF LEAGUE,

23 West Twenty-Third Street, New York.

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# Workingmen and the Tariff.

IT is our purpose to point out the facts, and the arguments derived from them, which prove that the workingman—the man who works for wages—is more than all others benefited by Protection, and, therefore, most interested in maintaining and perfecting it. By workingman is meant not only the man, but his family and dependents. Indeed, the families of workingmen are the chief beneficiaries of the existing protective system. If the different classes of the people of the United States and of Europe are compared, as regards their mental and physical condition, their habits, modes of life, social surroundings, their elevation in the scale of civilization, it is manifest that the widest distinction will be found to exist between the workingmen of the two countries. It will also be found that this distinction is the greatest, the most striking, between the families of the workingmen of the two countries. As the social position of any class is higher, in proportion to its advancement the distinction between the condition of that class here and abroad becomes less marked. The rich in both countries have the same advantages—enjoy the same privileges. Their families have the same comforts—indulge in the same luxuries. Descending the scale, distinctions gradually appear. The middle class in this country is better off, has more comforts and advantages, than the same class in Europe. The women and children of this class in the United States enjoy almost all the privileges which are accessible to any of the most favored in the community. If we go lower in the social scale, in Europe, the women and children, no less than the men, give evidences of inferiority in all the traits of womanhood and of manhood. In this country the women enjoy the advantages conferred by comparative relief from working for wages, and are permitted to devote themselves to the care of their homes and their children. The men possess the dignity and manliness of independent citizens. Their children mingle with the children of their more fortunate neighbors in the school and at play, while the more active and ambitious have an opportunity to advance, limited by nothing but their own powers and their own determination. Go still lower, and the distinction becomes still broader. Both men and women, and their children, in Europe, are literally slaves of toil and hunger, working hopelessly and aimlessly, looking forward to the grave as their first and only resting-place. The

family bonds and relations barely exist, and that motive, which in this land inspires the hours of toil—the hope of advancement, if not for the parents, at least for the children—has little if any force. Here, then, do we find the pre-eminent advantage of our American protective policy. It protects the workingman and his family. It saves them from degradation and distress. It makes the family relation, in all its attractive qualities, possible. It elevates the wives and children of the workingman. It relieves them, or most of them, from the need of working for their daily bread. It makes home-life possible. It affords to children leisure for early education, and thus opens up to them endless opportunities. The rich and the middle classes get some of the benefits of Protection. As compared with the poor and the working people, they get but little, and they would be nearly as well off under free trade, while the condition of the poor would become indescribably wretched. Our American workingmen who have never contrasted their condition with that of their competitors under low wages and insufficient work abroad, cannot, and do not, realize the perils of free trade. Let them read about their fellow-workmen on the other side of the water, or talk with one who has been forced to leave his native land by starvation wages and the hopeless destitution of his family, and they will comprehend the danger which now threatens them.

Free-traders are accustomed to dwell on the advantages conferred by Protection upon employers, the manufacturers and proprietors, who pay wages, hoping to excite the envy and hostility of workingmen. They do not mention the infinitely greater advantages of those who are employed. As a class, the employers of labor here make no greater profits than those of the Old World. Competition is active. The ambition of our people is ever alert to seize upon every opportunity for increasing their wealth, and no industry is long allowed to return unusual profits. It is soon overrun with competition, and its profits speedily turned to losses. But this same spirit of competition, sure to level down profits of employers, is the safeguard and the promoter of high wages for the employed. Stimulated by Protection, it strives to set every man at work, and it competes for labor as well as for profits. The demand for workingmen advances their wages, and so long as enterprise is encouraged and protected against foreign interference, so long will it continue to demand labor, and thereby sustain wages. Reverse the process, check and throttle our industries, discourage enterprise, and workmen must surely go begging for work; their wages decline, and, becoming insufficient for the support of their families, the workman's wife must come to his aid and join in the daily struggle, and his children suffer from neglect. Poverty and distress take the place of comfort and prosperity, and in time degradation and despair, hopeless and inevitable, become the lot of the American workingman, as it is and has for centuries been the lot of his fellow-workmen in Europe. Workingmen have, then, the greatest interest in the result of the pending discussion between Protection and Free Trade. Let them watch it, and see to it that no party and no combination of men or circumstances are permitted to overthrow or lower the barrier of Protection, which is the safeguard of their happiness for the present and of their hopes for the future.

THE Commissioner of The National Bureau of Labor, Hon. Carroll D. Wright, has submitted his report on Strikes and Lockouts, filling a 700-page volume, replete with information hitherto inaccessible. The startling feature of the report is the enormous cost to the country of the strikes and lockouts resulting from inability of workmen and employers to agree upon terms. The aggregate for six years is over ninety millions of dollars, of this sum two-thirds of the loss fall upon employes. The loss will be partially compensated if the emphasis given in the Commissioner's report leads to some more economical adjustment of the differences between workingmen and employers.

The States of New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Illinois, and Massachusetts, with 49 per cent. of the manufacturing establishments, supplied about 75 per cent. of the whole number of establishments affected by strikes, and 90 per cent. of the lockouts.

The following table shows the number of strikes occurring during each of the last six years, the number of establishments involved, and the average number of establishments involved in each strike :

| Years. | Strikes. | Establishments involved. | Average number involved in each strike. |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1881 | 471 | 2,928 | 6.2 |
| 1882 | 454 | 2,105 | 4.6 |
| 1883 | 478 | 2,759 | 5.8 |
| 1884 | 443 | 2,367 | 5.3 |
| 1885 | 645 | 2,284 | 3.5 |
| 1886 | 1,412 | 9,893 | 7.0 |
| Totals | 3,903 | 22,336 | General average 5.7 |

In 1887 there were, according to the best information obtainable, 853 strikes, details of which are not available.

As to causes or objects of strikes it is shown that increase of wages was the principnl one, 42.44 per cent. The other leading causes are as follows: For reduction of hours, 19.45 per cent. ; against reduction of wages, 7.75 per cent. ; for increase of wages and reduction of hours, 7.57 per cent. ; against increase of hours, 62 per cent. Total for the five leading causes, 77.83 per cent. ; all other causes, 22.17 per cent.

The results of the strikes in gaining the objects sought are as follows: Success followed in 10,407 cases, or 46.59 per cent. of the whole ; partial success in 3,004, or 13.45 per cent. of the whole, and failure followed in 8,910 cases, or 39.89 per cent. of the whole. By lockouts, 564 establishments, or 25.85 per cent. of the whole succeeded ; 190 or 8.71 per cent. partly succeeded, and 1,305, or 59.80 per cent. failed.

Disclaiming absolute accuracy the report gives the losses of employes resulting from strikes and lockouts as follows: Losses to strikers during the six years, $51,816,165 ; loss to employers through lockouts, $8,132,717, or a total wage loss to employes of $59,948,883. This loss occurred for both strikes and lockouts in 24,518 establishments, or an average loss of $2,445 to each establishment, or of nearly $40 to each striker. The assistance given to strikers for the same period, so far as ascertained, amounted to $3,325,057 ; to those suffering from lockouts, $1,105,538. These amounts, however, the Commissioner says are undoubtedly too low. The employers' losses through strikes for the six years amounted to $30,732,653 ; through lockouts, $3,432,261.

COMPARATIVE COST OF LIVING IN MASSACHUSETTS AND GR
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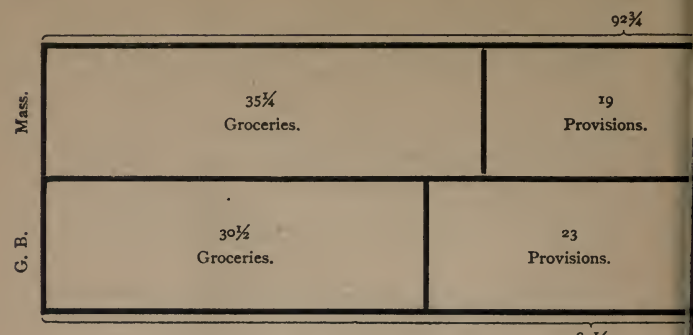
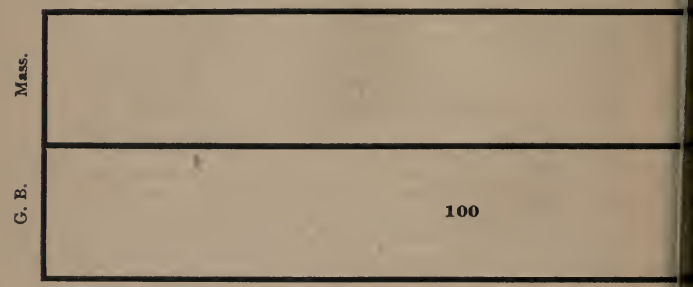



COMPARATIVE WAGES IN




**In the year 1883, for every dollar paid by English workingm way, paid one dollar and seventeen cents; and for every dollar in received one dollar and seventy-seven cents. The proportion of items of living expenses, is stated in figures on the diagram.**

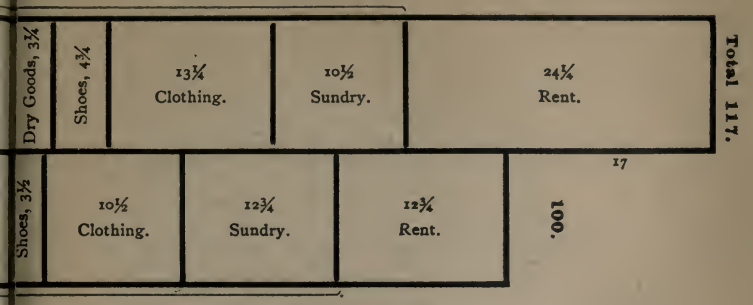
From the above tables, based upon the investigations of Carroll Report, it is shown that while the average wages in Massachusetts we It is also shown that if rent is excluded, the cost of living in Mas other words, while the average rate of duty on dutiable goods ente rent and including articles affected by import duties, was only 5½ cost of living is higher in Massachusetts than in most of the other Sta

The high cost of rent in Massachusetts may be pointed out as a —the laborer, the carpenter, mason, plumber, painter, plasterer—in f importations of products of cheap foreign labor to compete with the p

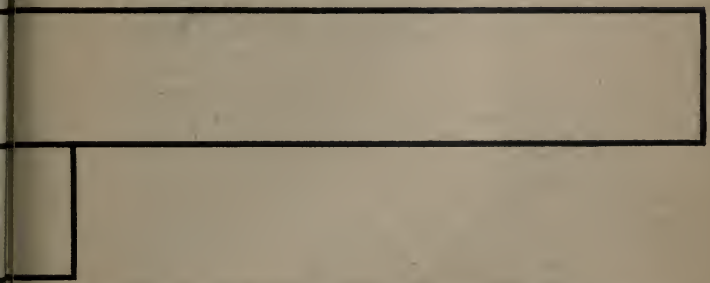
Since 1883, the cost of groceries, dry goods and clothing in this articles, has declined in proportion—and the difference of 5½ per cent

The higher cost of fuel in Massachusetts is chiefly due to the gre in Massachusetts than in Great Britain. There is no duty on anthraci

IN IN 1883, ASSUMING THAT SIMILAR ARTICLES ARE USED AND ANTITIES.




ETTS AND GREAT BRITAIN—1883.



g expenses, American workingmen in Massachusetts, living in the same ved by English workingmen, American workingmen in Massachusetts um, paid in each country for living expenses, required for the several

Chief of Massachusetts Bureau of Labor, as detailed in his 16th Annual nt. higher than in Great Britain, the cost of living was 17 per cent. greater. only 5½ per cent. greater than in Great Britain; or as 92¾ to 87¼. In sumption in 1883 was 42 45-100 per cent., the cost of living, excluding igher in the State of Massachusetts, than in Great Britain. The average

of the effect of the high wages paid to the absolutely protected industries asses of labor employed in building. Their industries are not depressed by eir labor.

reatly declined—especially clothing, so that the cost of living, as regards these Great Britain has probably been, if not entirely, to a large extent, removed.

and greater cost of transportation of coal from the mines to the consumer e fuel generally used in Massachusetts.

ACCORDING to the census of 1880, there were then in New York City 11,339 industrial establishments in which there were employed 146,179 men, 71,795 women, 9,378 children, total 227,352.

If we assume, as we are justified by experience in doing, that the men represent two persons besides themselves, it would make the whole number of persons in New York city deriving support from its manufacturing establishments, 519,710, or 43 per cent. of its entire population in 1880. The annual product of these establishments at that time amounted to $472,926,437, which is about one-eleventh of the production of the whole United States. The next largest manufacturing city is Philadelphia. The value of her manufactures for the same year was $324,342,935. It thus appears that the manufactures of New York city were nearly one-half greater than those of the next largest manufacturing city of the Union.

As Brooklyn may justly be comprehended in any estimate of the manufactures of this city which largely furnishes her capital, and a considerable portion of her work-people, it is proper to add the statement of her manufactures and the number employed in them. We find in the census of 1880 that there were then in Brooklyn 5,201 industrial establishments, employing 37,105 men, 7,020 women, 3,462 children, total 47,587.

If we allow, as in the case of New York city, that every man employed has at least two persons depending upon him, we have for the total number supported by the manufacturing establishments of Brooklyn 121,797 persons, out of a total population of 566,663, or 22 per cent. The value of her manufactures amounted to $177,223,142. If, now, we combine the industrial interests of the two cities of New York and Brooklyn we find the number of persons dependent upon their manufactures was 641,507, or one-eightieth of the total population of the United States at that time. We find the aggregate manufactures of the two cities amounted to more than $650,000,000, or nearly one-eighth the value of the entire manufactures of the United States. In other words 1¼ per cent. of the people of the United States, working in New York and Brooklyn, produced more than 12 per cent. of its industrial products.

These figures are given to show that the people of this city, and especially the working people, are far more seriously interested than the people of any other part of this country in the permanence and stability of the industries of the country, and in the maintenance of the protective system upon which their permanence and stability depend.

The following table exhibits the various industries upon which the prosperity of this city rests (omitting those which employ less than 1,000 persons) the number of persons employed, and the rate of duty by which they are protected from foreign competition.

| INDUSTRIES. | PERSONS EMPLOYED. | RATE OF DUTY. |
|---|---|---|
| Artificial Flowers | 3,498 | 50% |
| Book-binding and Blank-books | 4,068 | 20% to 25% |
| Boots, Shoes and Repairs | 5,587 | 30% |
| Boxes, Paper, etc. | 2,355 | 35% |
| Brass Castings | 1,330 | 45% |
| Bread Bakers, etc. | 2,837 | 20% |
| Carpentering | 3,499 | 35% |
| Carriages, etc. | 1,602 | 35% |
| Men's Clothing | 47,647 | 40% to 50% |
| Women's Clothing | 12,366 | 45c. lb. and 40% ad val. |
| Confectionery | 1,747 | 30% to 50% |
| Foundry and Machine Shop | 9,753 | 45% |
| Furnishing Goods | 1,702 | 50% to 60% |
| Furniture | 5,948 | 35% |

| INDUSTRIES. | PERSONS EMPLOYED. | RATE OF DUTY. |
|---|---|---|
| Furs, dressed, etc. | 2,440 | 30% |
| Gas and Lamp Fixtures. | 1,495 | 45% |
| Hats and Caps. | 2,631 | 20% to 60% |
| Jewelry. | 2,281 | 25% |
| Lithographing | 1,139 | 25% |
| Liquors, Malt | 4,245 | 40% to 60% |
| Marble and Stone Work. | 2,949 | 40% to 55% |
| Masonry, Brick and Stone. | 1,181 | |
| Millinery and Lace Goods. | 3,471 | 40% to 50% |
| Mixed Textiles | 4,701 | 60% to 80% |
| Musical Instruments. | 3,245 | 25% |
| Painting and Paper Hanging. | 1,843 | |
| Paper Hangings | 1,329 | 25% |
| Plumbing and Gas Fitting. | 2,008 | 45% |
| Printing and Publishing. | 9,578 | 25% |
| Shirts | 3,401 | 35% to 60% |
| Silk and Silk Goods. | 7,941 | 50% |
| Stationery | 1,681 | 25% |
| Tinware, Copper and Sheet-iron Ware | 1,605 | 45% |
| Tobacco, Chewing and Smoking, and Snuff. | 1,622 | 40c. to 50c. lb. |
| Tobacco, Cigars and Cigarettes. | 14,476 | 10% |
| Umbrellas and Canes | 1,345 | Umbrellas. 40% to 50%<br>Canes. 35% |
| Total | 180,546 | |

In these thirty-six industries there were employed 180,546 persons out of a total in all the industries of 227,352. These industries may therefore be considered as the most important, and we may assume that whatever affects them will to no less degree affect the others. It will not be denied that whatever affects these industries injuriously cannot fail to diminish the number of persons employed in them and reduce the wages of those who remain. This will be the inevitable effect of competition among the working people for employment.

Let us now consider what protection these several industries now enjoy and how they would be affected by serious reduction of the tariff. In the margin against the number of persons employed in each industry, we have set the rate of duty on the foreign product of that industry, with which it would be forced to compete under free trade. The rate varies from 20 per cent. to more than 100 per cent. Workingmen know enough of the profits in each industry in which they are employed to determine how much the prices of the articles they produce could be forced down before lower wages would be required, or the industry be closed. It may be safely left to them to see to it that their own occupation has all the protection it requires, and that they receive their share of its benefits. They have already secured for themselves in each of the industries such wages that no excessive profits remain for their employers. If any such profits have formerly been received, competition in recent years has reduced them to a fair level. If this be true then, any important reduction of duties would mean stoppage of business or reduction of wages. The effect of such a movement on not only the workmen in these industries, constituting 43 per cent. of the people in this city, but on all others of our people more or less dependent on or connected with them, can more easily be imagined than described. The reports coming daily from the City of London, concerning the increasing misery and distress of its working people, clamoring day and night for work or bread, and the imminent danger of a general uprising of those whose distress has gone beyond the power of human endurance or restraint, indicate with terrible emphasis, what would be the effect of free trade or inadequate protection on the working people of this city. They are now pursuing their industries with comparative comfort and content. Let them and all other classes see to it that this condition be not disturbed or imperilled by the impracticable schemes of theoretical economists, or by experimental legislation.

IT is the habit of a certain class of statesmen to affirm that prices of farm products have been lowered and prices of other products enormously raised by the tariff. It is easy to show that they are in error. The same articles and quantities which cost $94.74 November 2, 1887, would have cost $112.81½ November 1, 1860. Both because of the later prostration in 1860 when Secession had begun, and because the recent rise this year has been in part unnatural, it is more fair to compare November 1 of each year; the change in different classes of articles has been:

| | Nov., 1860. | Nov., 1887. | Per cent. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Farm food | $43.03 | $38.29½ | Decrease, 11.0 |
| Taxed articles | 9.07 | 9.88½ | Increase, 9.0 |
| Materials | 14.03 | 13.03½ | Decrease, 7.1 |
| Manufactured articles | 46.68½ | 33.52½ | Decrease, 28.2 |
| Total | $112.81½ | $94.74 | Decrease, 61.0 |

"Farm food" includes breadstuffs, beans and peas, meats, fresh and packed, lard and tallow, butter, cheese, milk, eggs, hay, potatoes, turnips, onions, cabbages, apples, and with dried apples, raisins. "Taxed articles" include sugar, brown and crushed; molasses, tobacco, whiskey; beer, coffee and tea (for many years taxed, though not now), salt, spices, rice, and also fish. Under "materials" are included only raw cotton, wool, hides and lumber. All other articles are here included with "manufactures," though a few, such as coal and hemp, are not properly so classed.

The striking difference between the decrease in farm food and materials, and the decrease in manufactured articles, merits especial attention. Let it be observed, first, that the great decline in the cost of transportation, from 65 cents in 1860 on grain from Chicago to 25 or less this year, accounts for the entire difference in the cost of breadstuffs and meats. Compare Chicago prices of December, 1860, and December, 1887:

| | Dec., 1860. | Dec., 1887. | | Dec., 1860. | Dec., 1887. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Wheat | $0.74 | $0.77 | Hogs, live | $4.25 | $4.85 |
| Corn | .27½ | .48½ | Hogs, best | 5.25 | 5.40 |
| Oats | .17 | .33 | Beef, good | 2.75 | 3.00 |
| Pork | 14.62 | 14.92½ | Beef, best | 3.00 | 5.00 |

The farmers as far west as Chicago clearly receive as much or more for their products now as they did in 1860, though the cheaper transportation has made prices here lower. Next reckoning the taxes paid on the taxed articles at each period, only 74½ cents in 1860 against $3.08 now, it appears that the articles of that class, exclusive of taxes, are on the whole cheaper in 1887 than in 1860. Of materials, wool is lower and foreign hides, but lumber is higher, and cotton has declined but little at the plantation, though 9.2 per cent. here. The following figures represent not quotations, but the cost of the same quantities at different periods:

| | Nov., 1860. | Nov., 1887. | Per cent. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Cotton goods | $2.84 | $2.13½ | Dec., 24.8 |
| Woolen goods | 3.05½ | 2.38 | Dec., 22.1 |
| Leather | 1.07½ | .97½ | Dec., 9.3 |
| Boots and shoes | 3.49½ | 2.85 | Dec., 18.5 |
| Silk and rubber | 2.64 | 2.07½ | Dec., 21.4 |
| Pig iron | 3.41 | 3.00 | Dec., 13.7 |
| Iron products | 7.36½ | 5.36 | Dec., 27.2 |
| Coal | 7.70 | 6.02 | Dec., 21.8 |
| Oil | 4.00 | .34½ | Dec., 91.4 |
| Tin and tin plates | 2.18 | 1.59½ | Dec., 27.0 |
| Lead and copper | 1.19½ | .80 | Dec., 33.1 |
| Brick, lime, lath, glass | 1.36½ | 1.68½ | Inc., 23.4 |
| Linseed-oil, turpentine and paint | 1.05 | .95½ | Dec., 9.0 |
| Soap, hemp and paper | 2.50½ | 1.22½ | Dec., 51.2 |
| Drugs and chemicals | 2.87 | 2.11½ | Dec., 26.3 |

If anybody tries to make it appear that the protective tariff now in force makes manufactured products more costly than they were under the revenue tariff of 1860, he has a large task before him. Nor is it possible to deny that the Western farmers, while paying 28 per cent. less for the goods they buy, receive more money at the farm than they received before this tariff was enacted.

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